THE RIFT IN THE WOODS.

I hate this vast expanse of dreary plain,
Outspread from the east to the west, a level floor,
And I long for a glimpse of one dear hill again,
With its single rift in the woods, like an open door.

I close my eyes, and lo! upon me still
Is the spell of that far valley which is home—
The river's song, the note of the whip-poorwill
And the tinkling bells of kine that go and come.

What joy to the radiant smile of morn
Flash o'er the purple mountains far and wide;
The beaded dew on fern and leaf and thorn
And the hovering marsh-mist close by the riverside!

One hill climbed up the west, and there on high,
Through a gap in the trees, as through a gate ajar,
How soft and white were the clouds that floated by,
How fair the setting sun and the evening star!

Sometimes I saw a man pass hand in hand
With a little child—and both were lost to view;
Or watched a young girl one brief moment stand
A graceful silhouette against the blue.

They knew not that the lad who watched them dreamed
His idle dreams as they vanished from his sight,
Until to him that narrow portal seemed
A shining entrance into the Infinite.

Mine eyes are tired to-night of this dreary plain
Outspread from the east to the west, a level floor,
And I long for a glimpse of one dear hill again,
With its single rift in the woods like an open door.

—Alice Lena Cole, in Youth's Companion.

The Hermit

A Story of the Wilderness

By CHARLES CLARK MUNN

Author of "Pocket Island," "Uncle Terry" and "Rockhaven."

CHAPTER XV.—CONTINUED.

"I'm sorry," he responded, smiling and raising his hat, "and yet, I'm glad. I've been on a tour over my old haunts, ending at the schoolhouse, and thinking of you."

"You find things changed, I presume," she answered coolly, now herself and ignoring his reference.

"Why, yes, of course. Everything seems to have grown smaller, including the old schoolhouse. That seemed a mere turkey coop. You have been after berries, I see," he added, as she made no reply to this.

"Why, yes," flashing a curious look at him, "country girls always go after berries, rake hay, and drive the cows, and I'm still a country girl, you see."

Martin laughed. "I hear you are also a schoolma'am now," he rejoined, thinking it wise to change the subject; "where do you teach?"

"In the same 'turkey coop' you just visited," she answered, smiling.

"Why, that's where we used to go to school together; that's funny." Then, as she made no response, he continued: "I've been all over the old farm, and up through the laurel pasture where we used to gather arbutus, and back by the old cider-mill. It made me feel like a boy again."

"That was pleasant," she replied in a lack-interest tone; "are you thinking of becoming a farmer again?"

"Hardly"—a little piqued at her coolness; "I've a notion, though, of building a dam on the farm and raising trout. That's been a hobby of mine for many years. Do you enjoy teaching school, Angie?" he asked suddenly, realizing that old memories and his plans failed to interest her.

"Why, yes, until winter comes. It's quite a long walk."

A pause, an inflection, a mere shading of tone will give a keen observer the key to another's feelings, and Martin, as he glanced down at the shapely, calico-clad girl beside him, read her thoughts and saw her life as it was in an instant. They had been as youthful lovers, all in all to one another, parting with fond promises—he apparently to forget his, and she to continue her simple life as pure and open as the brook he had that day followed. And now on his return, she would not, even by allusion to old occasions, admit they had ever been aught to one another. Had she wished to renew the old ties, or awaken his interest again, he had given her ample chance, and yet she ignored it. It was pride of the most indomitable sort, and while it hurt, he felt like taking off his hat to it. Then, as the history of her life, as related by Dr. Sol, returned to him on the instant—her heritage kept from her, a dependent on Aunt Comfort and obliged to walk a mile to and from that by-road schoolhouse each day, year after year, to earn a pittance—the pathos of it all smote him. He could buy half the village and have money left, and she whom he had many times held close in his arms, and to whom he had whispered loving words, was walking beside him gowned in faded calico and wearing worn-out shoes.

Worse than that, from his viewpoint, now that he had returned, anxious to atone for years of neglect and renew the old lovership, she would not even admit that it ever existed.

"Angie," he said, after a long pause, "I came near calling on you the evening I arrived. The doctor was out and I walked up to your house, but heard singing, and concluded you had callers."

"Well, why didn't you," she answered, smiling; "you are not bashful, are you?"

"No, but I didn't feel like intruding. I stood under the maples, however, and enjoyed your singing a few moments."

But even this brought no response, and fully conscious now that she intended to avoid all reference to old memories, he began speaking of his plans for trout raising.

"Won't you come in?" she asked pleasantly, when the house was reached; "Aunt Comfort will be glad to see you."

"No, thank you," he answered in the same tone, "not now." And, raising his hat, he turned away.

CHAPTER XVI.

SUNDAY IN GREENVALE.

Originally, a strict observance of the Lord's day began in Greenvale at sundown Saturday, and became a 24 hours of penance. No cooking was supposed to be done, no chores except imperative ones, long prayers were repeated night

OLD CY WALKER.

and morning by the heads of the families, two lengthy sermons by the orthodox parson, each extending to "seventeenthly," then to "finally," and "in conclusion," occupied most of the day. To the young it was a long, solemn period of gloom from sun to sun, and if a boy was detected near a brook, or caught cracking a nut, merciless punishment followed.

When the first bell sounded at nine o'clock, all (unless sick) were supposed to get ready, those at a distance came in all manner of conveyances, left lined up in the long row of sheds back of the church. At ten o'clock the second bell was rung, when all were expected to be in their seats and a penitent frame of mind.

If a late-arriving farmer entered, tiptoeing down the aisle in tallowed, but squeaking boots, all turned, frowning at him, and when the last note of the tolling bell died away and the parson arose in the tall pulpit, the solemnity was so dense that it could be felt.

Then came a short prayer, a hymn read in full but abbreviated a little by "Please omit the third and fifth stanzas," and droned in long metre by the assembled sufferers, and after that the long prayer in which the worthy parson not only recited what the Lord's plans were, but his theories in reference to them, together with a surfeit of advice. At last "Amen" was reached and then came a general clearing of throats.

At this juncture the old ladies usually nibbled fennel or flagroot.

Of the sermon that followed, also in long meter, the least said the better. Few understood it as anything pertinent to their daily lives or followed it beyond "tenthly," and when the inevitable collection, closing hymn, and benediction ended the two hours of gloom, the young people at least were glad to escape.

As he expected, Martin, when he attended church the first Sunday, was stared at slyly, and when services were over a few of the elderly ones halted in the porch to greet him, for Dr. Sol had spread the news that he was now quite rich and might take up his residence in Greenvale. Aunt Comfort was one of these, but Angie merely bowed and walked on with Hannah. As their path was the same, Martin had half expected the two families would walk homeward together and thus give him a chance to chat with Angie; but it did not occur. When the greetings were over, however, he walked away with Aunt Comfort.

When evening came, Martin was in somewhat of a quandary. He had met Angie three times, and on each occasion she had shown no more than ordinary courtesy and no vestige of any deeper feeling. Then to walk on ahead of the rest, as she had that morning, seemed almost a snub.

But a certain dogged determination inherent in him conquered indecision, and when the evening bell called and she appeared, he boldly advanced and in the most polite manner offered his company churchward.

Now it is a well understood social custom in Greenvale that, when a young couple of marriageable age walked to church together, they were engaged, or willing to be so considered, and hence, when Martin walked up the aisle that evening and faced about to let Angie enter the pew first, every eye in the church was upon them and her face was very red. Full well she knew what all were thinking and what a tempest of gossip would follow. It did not occur to Martin, however, until service was over, and as he opened the hymn book, found the place and stood up, he was quite proud of himself. But on the way home a species of frost seemed to fall upon Angie and her "Won't you come in?" when the gate was reached, was so chilly he came near refusing it. The old custom had recurred to him by this time, however, and he felt he owed her an apology. But it must be delayed, for Aunt Comfort and Hannah sat upon the porch, and for an hour chatted of commonplaces and the evening, which was one worth talking about, for the moon's full light glowed in the maples and fell checkered through the lattiged, vine-hid porch where they sat, the syringas in the dooryard mingled their odor with the new mown meadows, and the low murmur of the Mizzy falls whispered in the balmy air—an evening when Cupid should be abroad.

But Angie was decidedly out of harmony with it. She would not have gone to church had she dreamed that Martin would have intruded his company upon her. She could not refuse it without affront, and thus caught, had gone on to feel herself a spectacle for all eyes and a target later for all tongues, and this, in the face of her determined effort, so far, to avoid his attentions. Something of this came to him by degrees, however, and when they were left alone together his first words were humble.

"I owe you an apology, Angie," he said, quite meekly, "and realize I've put my foot in it, to-night; I didn't until I saw that we were stared at, and I hope that you will pardon my blunder."

"Oh, it was nothing," responded Angie, quietly, "and no harm has been done." It was the least she could say.

"I've been away so many years," he continued, "I've forgotten Greenvale's social laws, and how they will gossip here. I won't make another such blunder, I assure you." Then, as she made no further response to this, perforce he had to speak of something, and launched into a recital of the incidents of his recent trip with Dr. Sol. It was ancient history to her, but she listened and commented with simulated interest. It was forced, as Martin soon felt, and a gradual sense of his own failure to interest her grew upon him. Beyond that her chilly reception of him upon all occasions, added to the changes he had found in his old haunts, now rendered him gloomy. He had tried his best to be agreeable, he had spoken all the pleasant words he could, pertinent to the occasion; he had shown his desire to pay her attention, and it all availed not. His return had so far been a disappointment in all respects, and he began to wish that he had kept away from Greenvale.

"Did you ever read the story of Rip Van Winkle, Angie," he asked at last, "and how the old fellow, after sleeping 20 years, returned to his village to find himself dead to all? I never before realized how he felt, but to-night I do. I've been here less than a week, but I have come to realize 'How soon we are forgot,' as Rip said."

It was not a wise speech, and in view of the manner in which he had turned his back upon Angie years before, it was an ungrateful one. It stung her to the quick; and yet he was her guest, and she forbore to reply sharply.

"We are all in the same position," she answered pleasantly, "and out of sight, out of mind, applies to us all. If one forgets he should not complain at being forgotten."

"That is true," he replied, quick to catch her reproof, "but the grind of life and fight for a competence are factors that must be considered. We are not always our own masters in life."

"No," she said with a laugh, and still resolved to be nice, "I have realized that many times when my own purse was empty and I owed a few bills."

For a moment he paused, as if considering how to answer, and then suddenly rose to go.

"Once again, I beg your pardon for the annoyance I caused you this evening," he said, "and I assure you it won't happen again. I see I alone am to blame for being forgotten. I must make a fresh beginning. May I call again?"

"Why—yes—of course," she replied, also rising, "we are near neighbors, and why shouldn't you?"

And with that slight encouragement, he bade her good night.

There are some invitations to call that mean stay away.

CHAPTER XVII.

OLD CY WALKER.

From the orthodox standpoint of Greenvale, old Cy was a Sabbath-breaker, an unregenerate old scoffer, outcast, vagabond, and one best to avoid. From the boys' point of view he was a most delightful old comrade, whose knowledge of woodcraft was marvellous, whose method of existence was the only right and proper one, and whose companionship was to be sought at all times.

He knew where all the best trout pools were, how to line up and find the bee trees, set snares and traps; where nuts, berries, and wild grapes could be found; and more than all this, he was ready at all times to share this lore with them. He was to them a veritable Leatherstocking outlined on a background of forest, field, and stream, and his shapeless hat, patched raiment, kindly face, and quaint speech were familiar to all. With dog and gun always, and some of the village boys occasionally for companions, he roamed the woods and followed the streams about Greenvale, or worked for Aunt Comfort when needed. He lived in a hovel on her premises, was temperate, honest, and a friend to everybody except David Curtis. There was ample reason for that exception. In the long ago, old Cy, schoolmate, friend, and companion of Amzi Curtis, and later working for him in the mill, had aspired to own a respectable dwelling. He bought a small tract of land on the village outskirts, contracted with David Curtis for lumber, and when the house was built, gave him a mortgage to secure payment. That was almost accomplished when Amzi so mysteriously vanished. But lack of employment and illness fell to Cy's lot; he failed to pay as agreed; then David foreclosed, and after that old Cy became a vagabond, as it were.

Martin had been one of his boy admirers, and now since his return had induced the old man to take him fishing, and later to superintend the building of his dam and the clearing of land for a trout preserve. It was while thus engaged that a new thought came to Martin—nothing less than to buy the Mizzy falls and swamp above, build a low dam where the falls were, and flood a large area for trout and pleasure purposes.

There was also another consideration.

Those falls, the keynote to any manufacturing opportunities or future growth of Greenvale, were a valuable power that might become more so, and as a purely business investment, it seemed a wise one to Martin. For a few days he thought about it, and the more he thought, the more tempting in many ways the investment seemed.

"Cy," he said, when they were by themselves, "how much of the Mizzy swamp does Dave Curtis own, and what do you imagine he would ask for the falls and the land above them?"

Old Cy looked at him in astonishment. "I know every rod he owns above 'em," he answered finally, "but ye couldn't buy one 'thout payin' ten times what it's wuth, 'n' then a deed on 't ain't no good 'thout Amzi's signin'."

"Oh, I expect that," answered Martin, indifferently, "and as far as Amzi's signature—why, he'll never come back. It must be twenty years since he disappeared."

"I'm not so sure o' that," responded old Cy, resolutely; "I've allus held he was still alive, 'n' I believe it yit. Ez fer Dave's settin' a price on the Mizzy falls 'n' his land, he's been figgering with some out o' town already. I heerd him."

"You heard him!"

"I did, fer sartin. I was up the Mizzy one day last spring, huntin' fer a mink trap that had got dragged off, 'n' I heard some one comin' through the brush 'n' laid low. 'Twas Dave 'n' a city man, 'n' Dave was showin him round and tellin' him how handy twas to float logs down the Mizzy in spring freshets, 'n' about how much he owned. They sot down on a log 'n' talked more 'n' an hour, 'n' I heerd it all. The city man had a scheme to build a mill 'n' grind up wood 'n' make paper, but they didn't make a dicker, fer Dave sot such an ungodly price, the man wouldn't pay it."

"How much?"

"Thirty thousand dollars!"

Martin gave a low whistle. He had heard Curtis was considered "sharp," but this was such a fabulous sum for the impassable Misery swamp and water power that it took his breath away.

"I've kept watch fer that man showin' up ever since," continued old Cy, "an' if he ever does, I'll open his eyes 'bout Amzi 'n' one or two other matters. I've been roostin' round on back fences now fer a good many years, waitin' to git square with Dave Curtis! Why, all his medder land 'n' houses 'n' both mills 'n' woodland ain't taxed fer but six thousand dollars, 'n' askin' thirty fer the Mizzy swamp 'n' them tumble down mills ain't no better 'n stealin'."

Then Martin laughed, for old Cy's ideas of business were as primitive as his method of living.

[To Be Continued.]

CAPPED BY THE COLONEL.

His Suicide Story Placed All the Other Good Ones in the Shade.

The tourists were returning to England. While waiting their time on the deck of a steamer, relates Tit Bits, one of them observed that if a prize should be given to the most desperate attempt at suicide it would be given to the Irishman who "vowed to kill himself or perish in the attempt."

"Nay," said another, "he was clean beaten by the fellow that I read of in a tale who 'plunged a dagger in his heart, discharged a revolver through his brain, swallowed the poison, and sprang from the bridge into the river below.'"

"Ah! but one never heard of such a case in real life," said one.

"Guess I have," said Colonel Dollarsworth, a Yankee. "There was a young French officer who arranged it so that his death should be the talk of all Europe. He went down to the beach with a rope, a pistol, a phial of poison, and a matchbox. He placed one end of the rope to the top of a tide-mark post, slipped the other round his neck, set his clothes on fire, swallowed the poison, levelled the pistol at his head, and threw himself off the post—all at once."

"Well, he deserved to succeed," was the general exclamation.

"But he didn't, though, for the bullet cut the rope and let him swash into the sea, which put out the fire. The swallowing of so much water brought up the poison, and the flood tide washed him ashore all alive and fresh."

Wrapping Himself in Silence.

The late Herbert Spencer is said to have been lacking in humor. It was either profound humor or an equally profound absence of it which accounts for his conduct on one occasion, if the story which follows is true. On one of his visits to his friend, Grant Allen, the novelist and philosopher, Spencer came provided with two curious objects behind his ears. The purpose of them was soon evident, for when the conversation did not interest him he pulled the things over his ears, and so insulated himself against idle words.—Youth's Companion.

Railroad Time Card.

LOUISVILLE & NASHVILLE.

ARRIVAL OF TRAINS AT PARIS.

From Cincinnati—10:58 am; 5:33 pm; 9:45 pm.
From Lexington—5:11 am; 7:45 pm 8:28 pm; 6:10 pm.
From Richmond—5:05 am; 7:50 am; 8:18 pm.
From Maysville—7:40 am; 3:15 pm.

DEPARTURE OF TRAINS FROM PARIS.

To Cincinnati—5:15 am; 7:55 am 8:30 pm.
To Lexington—7:50 am; 11:05 am; 5:40 pm; 9:49 p. m.
To Richmond—11:10 am; 5:38 pm; 9:51 pm.
To Maysville—8:00 am; 6:20 pm.

F. B. CARR, Agt.

FRANKFORT & CINCINNATI.

Arr. from Frankfort—8:30 am; 3:25pm.
Lve. for Frankfort—9:30 am; 5:42 pm.
All F. & C. trains arrive and depart from L. & N. Station.

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